Indo-American Cooperation

†828. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the areas in which agreement for joint ventures has been signed between India and America;

(b) whether America has expressed its willingness to play a military role in Kashmir, and if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the decision Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) India and the United States have a shared commitment to deepen cooperation across the full spectrum of bilateral relations and international issues of mutual interst, including in political and security matters, defence, counter-terrorism, economic and commercial relation, science and technology, health energy and environment.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

British Prime Minister's Statement on Kashmir

829. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister of U.K. on his arrival at New Delhi on 4th January, 2002, made a statement that Pakistan's position on Kashmir is very strong;

(b) if so, whether it shows that U.K.'s position on Kashmir is quite clear;

(c) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(d) to what extent his visit has been successful keeping in view of his statement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) In an interview to the BBC on 3 January, PM Blair is reported to have said that "Paskistan has a very strong position on Kashmir and they are entitled to that political position". In the same

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

interview, PM Blair had also said, "Most people recognise...that there cannot be any place for the type of terrorist acts, killing innocent civilians, that we have seen in the past few weeks." Subsequently, Prime Minister Tony Blair personally clarified that his informal remarks on Pakistan's position on Kashmir had been quoted out of context. What he had said was that even if a country has a strong position on certain issues such as Kashmir, there can never be any justification for terrorism. In an interview on 6 January, PM Blair said India also has a "very strong view" on Kashmir.

(c) Government of India also subscribes to the view that no political cause can be used to justify terrorism. Government position is principled and clear. The entire State of Jammu & Kashmir is an integral part of the Indian Union. A part of the territory of the State is under the forcible and illegal occupation of Pakistan. India is committed to resolve all outstanding issues with Pakistan peacefully through direct bilateral dialogue as envisaged under the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration.

(d) Prime Minister Blair's visit was extremely successful and helped in the overall consolidation and improvement of bilateral political and economic ties.

Export of software to Pakistan and Taliban

830. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it had come to Government's notice sometime back that a Bangalore based Chinese software firm has been exporting software to Pakistan and Taliban prejudicial to the country's security interest;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c) Government is not aware of any Bangalore based Chinese software fiirm exporting software to Pakistan or to the Taliban.

Regional cooperation on economic development in North Eastern Region

831. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the various efforts made by Government and consequent response of